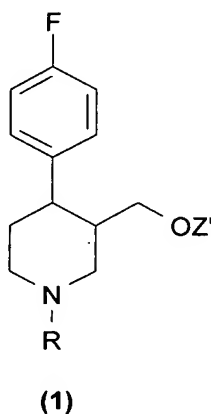


**Amendments to the claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

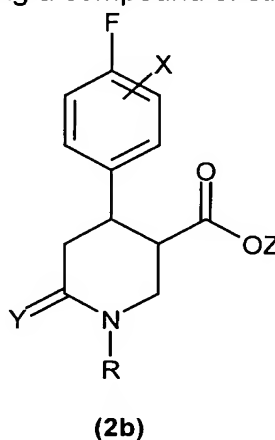
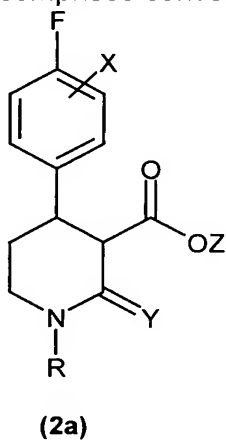
Claims 1-12 (Cancelled).

13. (New) A process for the preparation of 4-aryl-piperidines of structure (1)



in which R is hydrogen or an alkyl, aralkyl, aryl, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, arylalkoxycarbonyl, aryloxy carbonyl group; and Z' is a 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl group;

which process comprises converting a compound of structure (2a) or (2b),



in which

in 2a

Y is oxygen or sulfur;

R is hydrogen or an alkyl, aralkyl, aryl, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, arylalkoxycarbonyl, aryloxy carbonyl group;

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X is hydrogen or from one to four reducible groups; and

Z is a 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl group, and

in 2b

Y is sulfur;

R is hydrogen or an alkyl, aralkyl, aryl, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, arylalkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl group;

X is hydrogen or from one to four reducible groups; and

Z is a 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl group;

into a compound of structure (1).